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Follow the Saints.

A MEMORIAL

OF

SAMUEL McCORKLE,

A RULING ELDER FOR THIRTY-FOUR YEARS OF

THE FIRST PRSBYTERIAN CHURCH,

OF LYNCHBURG, VA.,

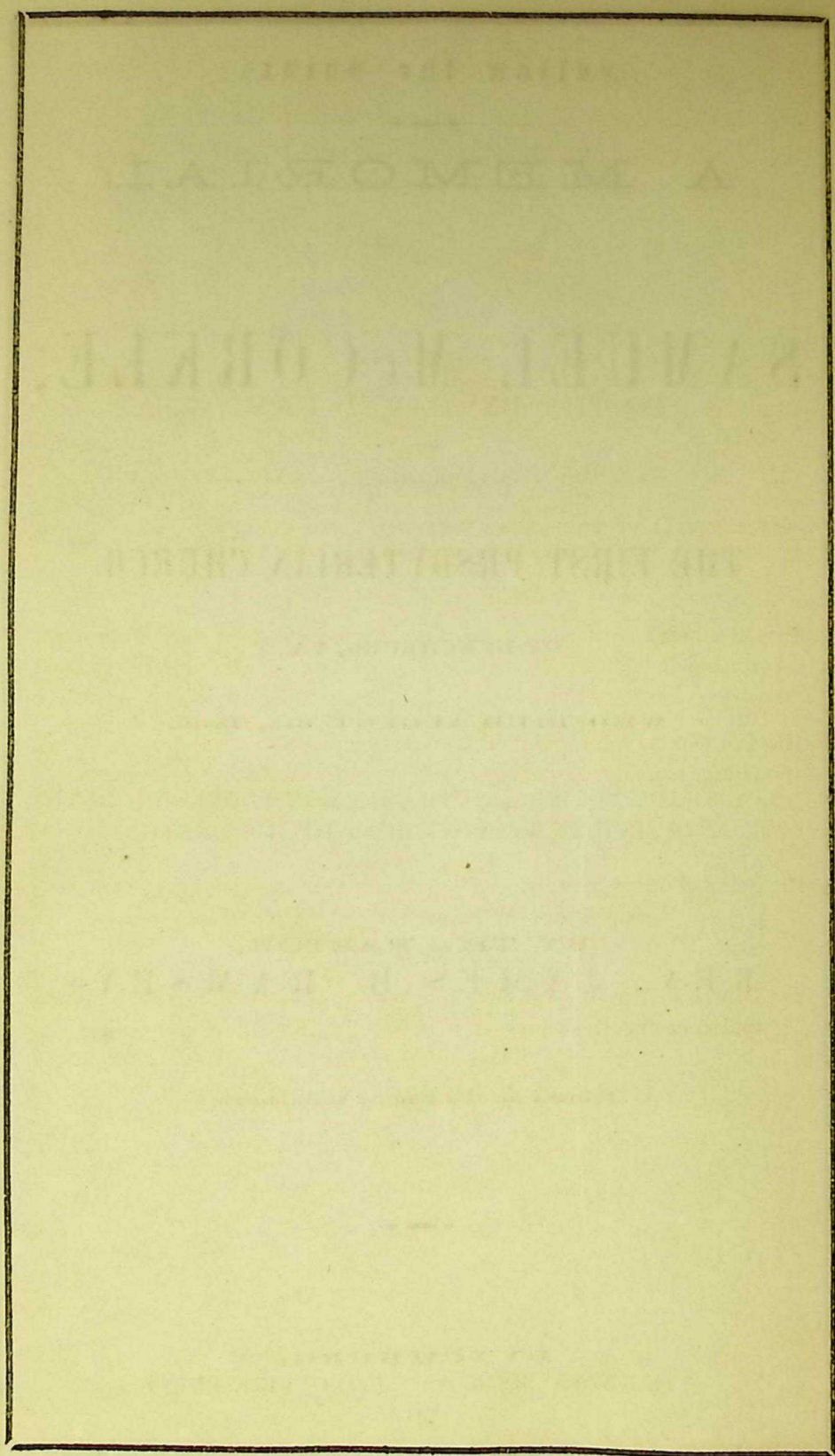
WHO DIED AUGUST 6th, 1866.

AN OBITUARY NOTICE AND THE SERMON ADDRESSED TO THE
CHURCH IN IMPROVEMENT OF HIS DEATH.

BY THE PASTOR,
REV. JAMES B. RAMSEY.

Printed for the Family and Church.

LYNCHBURG:
VIRGINIAN BOOK AND JOB OFFICE PRINT.
1867.



TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY,

AND

TO A MOURNING CHURCH,

THIS MEMORIAL OF ONE GREATLY BELOVED AND HONOURED, IS AFFECTION-
ATELY INSCRIBED,

WITH THE PRAYER,

That the heart most deeply smitten by his departure may be sweetly
soothed and powerfully sustained by the grace of her Divine Lord;

And that

His five sons and three daughters may never prove unworthy of such a
father, sacredly honouring his memory by emulating his virtues
and his usefulness;

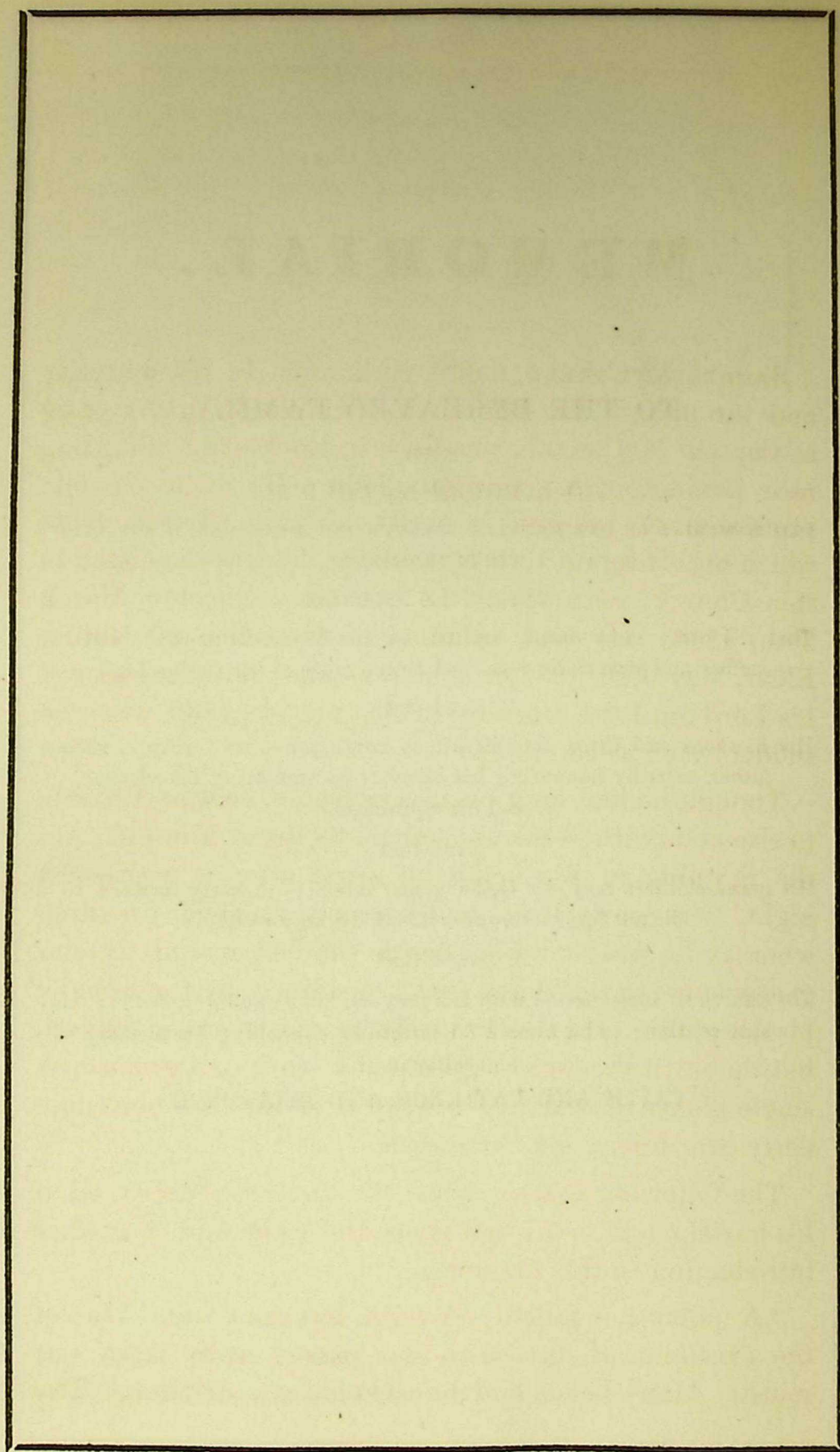
And that

His grand-children may, by God's grace, extend and carry forward to a
distant future the influence of his holy example;

And that

The Church so long blessed with his prayers, labors and benefaction, may
still continue to be blessed in faithfully cherishing his memory
and following his

FAITH AND PATIENCE AND DILIGENCE.



MEMORIAL.

SAMUEL McCORKLE, familiarly known in his own city and throughout the Church in Virginia for many years as Captain McCORKLE, was born in Rockbridge Co., Va., near Lexington, August 30th, 1800. He made a public profession of religion in the Lexington Church, from which on his removal to Lynchburg, he was dismissed to this Church, with which he became connected March 30th, 1830. He was ordained to the office of Ruling Elder, May 30th, 1833, in which he most faithfully served his Lord until the morning of August 6th, 1866, when he suddenly fell asleep in Jesus.

Though he had long been very feeble, he was still able to rise and, with some assistance, to dress himself. On the morning of his death he arose after a wearisome night, very early, and had scarcely finished dressing, when as he was standing beside the bed he quietly and gently sunk to the floor, partly sustained by the arms of his daughter. He was immediately raised upon the bed, but the spirit passed away without a word or a groan. A single glance of the eye toward a loving face bent tenderly over him and all was over.

The following extract from the discourse delivered at his burial contains all that is needful to be said in further introduction to this memorial:

"A pillar has fallen. A light has gone out. One of the excellent of the earth has passed away from our midst. Many heads and households are stricken. The

Church weeps. The whole community mourns a heavy loss, for devoted as he was to his own Church, he prayed for and rejoiced in the spiritual prosperity of every other. His qualities of mind and his habits eminently fitted him to be a business man, to this he devoted himself with untiring energy, and as a matter of duty to God; and in it he was steadily and highly successful. The deep and fixed conviction that he could thus best glorify God, caused him to feel that it was almost a sin to take the relaxation which, especially in later years, his failing strength rendered necessary. Dying as he did at the age of sixty-six, having possessed a vigorous constitution, I cannot but regard him as, in part at least, a victim to this conscientious devotion to his calling, as the work which God had given him to do, especially combining, as it did, with those unreasonable and cruel business habits which seem to exact of the merchant an almost unremitting application and the entire absorption of his daily time.

For nearly nine weary months had our honored brother been a great sufferer, not indeed with acute pain, except during the first few days,—but with what is really worse, extreme nervous debility, affecting every physical and mental function and producing very deep depression. This was especially the case in the early part of this period; a very few minutes attention to any thing produced confusion of thought and deep distress. In this condition nothing but a miracle could have enabled him to enjoy the comforts of faith and hope. But even then it was interesting to observe how, when expressing himself most sadly, some words would drop, showing that his heart, steady as the needle to the pole, was always turning to Jesus. During the latter months he obtained more self-control, and though he always lamented, as he had done in health, the want of more sensible joy and confident *assurance of hope*, yet I never saw him when

with tears of gratitude he could not say in the assurance of *faith*, "I know whom I have believed." He thought himself nearer his end than any of his friends did, and frequently so expressed himself; and especially for days before his death repeatedly said that without a very great change, such as he could not expect, he could not last much longer, adding that the hour of his departure would be a blessed relief and most welcome.

Education
This Church especially is sorely bereaved and desolate. Never in all her history has the hand of death stricken her so sorely. He was identified with all her interests for thirty-six years, and in the character of an efficient Ruling Elder for thirty-four years. In all our ecclesiastical ~~jurisdiction~~ his presence was welcomed, and his soundness of judgment and singleness of purpose highly valued. But it was in his own Church, and especially among those who had the salvation of souls and the glory of God most at heart, that he was most appreciated, loved and honoured, and the power of his example and influence most deeply felt. His very presence in our solemn assemblies, as he sat in his accustomed seat, before the whole congregation, earnestly joining in the devotions and humbly listening to the truth of God, was itself a living sermon, and one of his pastor's strongest encouragements in preaching. His whole life and labors, and his liberal and judicious benefactions have been a blessing of untold value to this Church, for which she can never cease to thank our blessed Lord who gave him to us, and whose abounding grace made him what he was. To this Church especially God is speaking in a voice not to be mistaken, and the lessons which it is intended to impress upon our saddened hearts, we shall, at another time soon, endeavour to unfold for its especial benefit."

It was in fulfillment of this purpose, that three weeks after, on September 3rd, the following sermon was

preached, and the pastor in yielding to the request of the family of his beloved and honoured friend and Elder, to permit this memorial of him to be printed, does it more cheerfully in the hope that in this way the design of it in regard to the whole Church will be more fully attained, and he takes this occasion now, after six months have passed away since it was addressed to them, to express to each member of his beloved charge, his conviction of the importance of every exhortation here presented, and does again most tenderly and affectionately beseech them to give most diligent heed to these things, and to rest satisfied with nothing but the highest spiritual attainments and usefulness.

S E R M O N .

That ye be not slothful but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.—Heb. vi, xii.

over
Man's influence does not end with his life. It never ceases. That of the ungodly may be very much modified and limited, and its extension totally prevented by the mightier influences of redeeming grace; but even then the manifestations and exercises of that grace will be forever different to just that extent, from what they otherwise would have been. But the influence of a holy life and example has no such limitation. Falling in as it does with the gracious purposes of God, being part of his own appointed instrumentality by which the eternal triumph of good ~~and~~ evil is to be secured, it is not only indestructible, but so long as the world lasts progressive. It may so mingle with the other streams of individual influence in the great current of increasing moral power as it rolls on from generation to generation, that like the waters of any single tributary to some mighty river, it can never be eliminated from the mass with which it is so mingled as to seem lost. But there is an eye that can track its course and that follows it on in all its secret mingling and spreading to its final result at the judgment seat. Service for God, holy labours and holy example, can never be lost. They are really *God's own work*, not man's. Believers are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Their holy labours and example are the results of new-creating grace, and are the highest and most illustrious displays of His own glory. This is the secret of their power; it is this that makes them im-

perishable; and so it is this that warrants us in holding them up in the name of God to the admiring gaze and imitation of the world.

Whatever, therefore, may be at any time said in praise of the conduct and character of the christian, is not to his personal praise and honour, but to the honour of that Divine Grace that made him what he was and that really saved him from himself. So felt the great Apostle to the Gentiles when compelled to speak of his own more abundant labours for his Lord, "yet not I," he adds, "but the grace of God which was with me." Is it to the praise of that poor bankrupt who has squandered his property, beggared his family, defrauded his friends, and brought himself to shame and degradation, that his greatest creditor in compassion to his misery, bestows upon him another fortune after forgiving his debt, and surrounds him with all the comforts of a better home than which he had lost? And when others point to that restored home and wealth and comfort, or when he himself thinks or speaks of it, does not every word instead of being to his personal praise, only speak out his own former degradation and shame while it proclaims the praises of his benefactor, and presents him as utterly worthless except as the undeserving object of that benefactor's kindness? Just so it is with all the graces of the believer. All that covers his character with moral beauty, all that fills his life with works of usefulness, all that makes him in any degree a model to be imitated, is not his own, but the gift of free and sovereign grace; and all therefore must redound to the praise and glory of that grace alone.

It is only thus that any good in man can properly be held up to the admiration and imitation of others. And this renders it not only eminently proper to do this but

an imperative duty, that God may be glorified in the most glorious of His works, and those in which He Himself regards His honour as most deeply involved,—His works of grace in human hearts. Thus too an entrance is made for that grace into other hearts; the fire enkindled in one becomes thus a means by which other hearts are also filled with the same holy fire of divine love. Hence the injunction of the text—"Be not slothful but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

Among these none who knew him can hesitate to place Capt. SAMUEL McCORKLE, our beloved and honoured Elder. Faith and patience, expressing themselves in unremitting diligence in serving God, were the prominent features of his character. Called away from us to inherit those promises in which here he trusted so implicitly, even in hours of the deepest darkness and sorrow, he is still not lost to us. In his memory and example this Church possesses a rich treasure. He has left us these, as well as the actual results of his love and labours while here, as an inheritance, which if rightly appreciated and used may prove a blessing as great as was his life. It is not every church that is thus blessed; it is but few that have such a memory to embalm and treasure up as a monument of God's distinguishing favour, and a stimulant to its members to high attainments in holiness and earnest and effective services in advancing His kingdom. If we are not greatly in advance of those who possess no such treasure, who have been trained and formed under no such influence, and who never felt the stimulating influence of such an example, great will be our guilt and deep our condemnation.

His whole life and character are now, by his death, calling us to a fuller exemplification of the three cardi-

nal christian graces of the text: faith, patience and diligence.

1. He was preëminently a man of *faith*. In him this was the all controlling principle. He was not governed by *feeling*, or impulses, or principles of expediency, or a regard to prevailing opinions or public sentiment. He believed God, not with a mere speculative or traditional or logical faith, but in him it was a fixed and firm reliance on the word of a God of truth, not a mere belief in abstract doctrines so much as a faith in a personal God and Saviour. This gave to all his views of truth and duty a permanence, a freedom from fluctuation, and a constancy of power that was very manifest. He was not one of those who are alternately hot and cold, now blazing with zeal and now spiritually torpid, now all activity and now again unmoved. Where this is the character of professors of religion, it marks a weakness of faith, and it shows that even when most zealous and active, that zeal and activity arise from accidental circumstances and surrounding influences, rather than from the pressure of divine truth upon the conscience and divine love upon the heart. Where faith is the *governing* principle, there are not such fluctuations. The object of faith is the unchanging truth of God, and the soul resting upon this becomes uniform and steady in all its action, amidst the ever varying phases of external circumstances and internal feelings. The feelings and emotions are the result of influences that are never two days alike, and hardly two successive hours. When these rule they produce in the conduct the same fluctuations and utter uncertainty where you will find the man or on what to depend from him.

It was this firm and steady *faith* that made our beloved friend so useful, and it is in this respect that we are now called on to imitate him. Never was there a period in

the Church when it was more important that this power of faith as a steady, all-controlling and guiding principle of action should be constantly held up and impressed upon the mind of every christian. There is a very general idea pervading the Church that its growth is to be secured by a series of spasmodic efforts, in which by an appliance of unusual methods and a great multiplication of special exertions for a short period, a new life and energy is to be infused into the Church and sinners converted. Anything indeed is better than continued stupor and lukewarmness. But if the Church of Christ is ever to advance to its true position and influence in the world, and to operate among the masses of fallen humanity as a mighty force attracting them to God and salvation, it will not be by these occasional bursts of zeal and devotion, but by a *uniform, constant, earnest, sustained* spiritual influence, which like the attracting power of the heavenly bodies will be always felt and always effective, or like the oil distilled from the olive trees into the golden lamps of Zechariah's vision—a constant and unintermitting influence. When a man's zeal and activity depend on the religion of those around him instead of on the power of faith in him, perceiving and bringing down upon his own heart the influences of the unseen world and of God's unchanging truth, they are sadly defective. And this defect is alas very prevalent. It is only as this faith operates steadily in the heart of individual believers, and so produces a uniformity of zealous and self-denying exertion that the Church can rise above this fitful and intermitting state in which the blessings of revival are lost continually in the succeeding period of declension.

Most earnestly would I therefore hold up this feature of our departed brother for imitation. Walk by faith, not by feeling. Let the word of God be your only rule,

not the circumstances of the time, or expediency, or present success, or failure; and let the grace and promise of God be all your dependence in every effort you make for the good of Christ's church. "*Only* BELIEVE." Then however dark the days, however adverse the external circumstances, however discouraging the prospects, however crushing the sorrows, there will be the same steady and persistent working for God and his Church, and the same earnest clinging to the cross and the promises as your all-sufficient refuge and hope, in the darkest hour of temptation, depression and disease, as in the brightest light.

His faith never was more manifest than during the long and tedious months of his prostration by the disease that prostrated his life. An impression has gone out that his last days were darkened by melancholy, that during much of his illness he was left without the sustaining consolations of that religion that had controlled his whole life. No impression could be more incorrect. God so ordered all the circumstances of his illness that it was calculated utterly to deprive him of all the usual instruments of comfort, such as reading, or even hearing prolonged conversation, or continuous thought; and in addition to produce a degree of nervous derangement and depression that threatened at one time an utter prostration of intellect, and surrounded every view with gloom. This produced a constant conflict of soul, a terrible and most trying struggle, in which the soul oppressed and clouded by the crumbling ruins of the earthly tenement, was ever reaching forth with an intensity of desire and at times an agony of determined effort, in which the very expressions of self-distrust and condemnation and rejection of its own experiences as unsatisfactory, and insatiable longing after Christ and larger measures of his grace and a full assurance of his love, were the strongest

proofs of a faith that no temptations of the adversary could crush. Just as the determined courage of the soldier appears most in the day of fiercest battle and when his enemies seem about to overwhelm him. But the battle was fought, the victory won, and even while the poor body was still failing, and the shattered nerves were quivering to the lightest touch of mental or physical annoyance, and under the pressure of a disease in which every laboring function was dragging down the struggling spirit, the steadiness with which he held on to Christ as his Saviour, and the eagerness with which he longed for the hour of his departure, saying—"Come Lord Jesus, come quickly," was evidence of a triumph that only the gospel could give.

Let not the trembling believer then be discouraged by the darkness and conflicts of our beloved friend in his last illness, but rather encouraged. These conflicts were such as only showed more fully the genuineness and power of his faith. A faith that could say, even when forsaken, "*My God, my God,*" and would not let go its hold under the fiercest assaults, proves itself to be heaven born; and if it could withstand and triumph in a case like his and subjected to such trials, no believer need fear that in the swellings of Jordan he shall find himself unsustained and forsaken.

It was Bunyan's intimate knowledge of the human heart and the workings of grace that led him to describe his representative Christian in the final struggle, not in the ecstasies of triumph, but, as at first, nearly overwhelmed by his fears, and that to a much greater degree than was our departed brother at any time. The whole description is so perfect and impressive, I shall quote it:

"Christian and Hopeful then, when they came to the river, especially Christian, began to despond in their

minds, and looked this way and that, but no way could be found by which they might escape the river. * * *

They then addressed themselves to the water, and entering, Christian began to sink, and crying out to his good friend Hopeful, he said, 'I sink in deep waters, the billows go over my head, all his waves go over me.' Then said the other, 'Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom and it is good.' Then said Christian, 'Ah! my friend the sorrows of death have compassed me about, I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey;' and with that a great darkness and horror fell upon Christian, so that he could not see before him. Also here he in a great measure lost his senses so that he could neither remember nor talk orderly of any of those sweet refreshments that he had met with in the way of his pilgrimage. But all the words that he spake still tended to discover that he had horror of mind and heart fears that he should die in that river and never obtain entrance in at the gate. Here also, as they that stood by perceived, he was much in the troublesome thoughts of the sins that he had committed, both since and before he began to be a pilgrim. It was also observed that he was troubled with apparitions of hobgoblins and evil spirits, for ever and anon he would intimate so much by words. Hopeful, therefore, had much ado to keep his brother's head above water; yea, sometimes he would be quite gone down, and then, ere awhile, he would rise up again half dead. Hopeful did also endeavour to comfort him, saying, 'Brother, I see the gate and men standing by to receive us;' but Christian would answer, ''Tis you, 'tis you they wait for; for you have been faithful ever since I knew you.' 'And so have you,' he said to Christian. 'Ah! brother,' said he, 'surely if I was right He would now rise to help me; but for my sins He hath brought me into the snare and hath left me.' Then said Hopeful, 'My brother, you have quite

forgot the text, where it is said of the wicked, "There are no bands in their death and their strength is firm, they are not troubled as other men, neither are they plagued like other men." These troubles and distresses that you go through in these waters are no sign that God hath forsaken you, but are sent to try you whether you will call to mind that which heretofore you have received of His goodness, and live upon Him in your distresses.

"Then I saw in my dream that Christian was in a muse awhile, to whom also Hopeful added these words, 'Be of good cheer, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole;' and with that Christian broke out with a loud voice, 'Oh! I see him again and he tells me, 'When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.' Then they both took courage, and the enemy was after that as still as a stone, until they were gone over. Christian therefore presently found ground to stand upon, and so it followed that the rest of the river was but shallow; thus they got over."

2. Patience is the second grace here held up to view in those whom we are exhorted to follow, and by which they have inherited the promises. Patience here and every where else in scripture means not merely uncomplaining submission to suffering, but unfaltering perseverance in trusting and obeying God in spite of all suffering and opposition and under the severest trial. It is not a mere passive but an active grace. '*Patient perseverance*,' unflinching and unswerving adherence to Christ and his service in the midst of darkness and delays and trials, this is its meaning. It is therefore evidently the effect of a strong faith. "He that believeth shall not make haste." And it was a very manifest trait in the character of our friend and brother. In what he regarded as the work of the Lord nothing could discourage him,

else this house of God in which we worship had never been built, and this Church had long ago lost its very being. Patiently and steadily he stood by it, cherished it, laboured for it, and interested others in it, until having been instrumental in holding it up in its greatest weakness, he was permitted to see it, not indeed what he desired, but in a condition such as compared with what it was, made his heart glad, and filled him with thankfulness. On the day this house was dedicated to God, nearly eight years ago, no tongue could express the deep, tender, overflowing gratitude of his heart that God had so graciously and wonderfully prospered them.

Be ye followers of him in this, brethren. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." "For ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise." Be not discouraged at difficulties, let no delays in the attainment of any end or accomplishment of any work in which God's glory and men's salvation and your own holiness are concerned, ever tempt you to let go or slacken your efforts in behalf of it. It is this determined patient effort that ensures success, because it is to such only that God's blessing is ensured. It is God's method to *try* the faith of those whom he would make greatly useful. That faith that will not secure earnest perseverance for God's cause through all the difficulties that earth and hell can interpose is not a faith that can receive from God any great blessing either for itself or others.

Let the example of our brother stimulate you to the same patient perseverance in working out your own salvation. Hold fast the profession of your faith without wavering, for He is faithful who hath promised. Though your way be dark, though the joys of a confident assurance may not fill your heart, though your hopes may

often be faint and your heart trembling, still go forward. Let no fluctuation of feeling, no secret doubts of your acceptance, no deep consciousness of your sins and grievous shortcomings tempt you to falter for one moment. "Wait for the Lord," and he will certainly never disappoint your expectations. It was this patient perseverance in duty and trust, though scarcely ever enjoying that perfect confidence and never perhaps that joyousness of christian experience that makes such perseverance easy to many others, it was this that gave to the example of our brother a force and power that otherwise it could never have had. It was a life long conflict with him; inspired by a clear, firm and unshaken faith, he saw the heavenly prize, and never for a moment laid his armour aside; and if ever the promise—"to him that overcometh"—belonged to any it belonged to him. Who ever knew of any period of visible declension or backsliding during his whole course of forty years of Christian experience?

3. But we are thus brought to consider the third thing in our text and in his character,—*diligence*—"that ye be not *slothful*, but followers," &c. This word "*slothful*" implies an ease-loving, self-indulgent spirit that shrinks from duties involving laborious effort, or self-denial or self-sacrifice, and it requires the very opposite spirit in those who would tread in the footsteps of the heirs of salvation. Just as the Lord requires of every one who will follow him that he "deny himself daily and take up his cross." It implies an obedience, *prompt*, *earnest*, and *constant*.

Of such christian diligence and earnestness our departed friend was an example, known and read of all men. He was the very impersonation of this diligence in christian duty. He was diligent in *praying*, in *working*, in *giving*

Where in all the church have you ever known a christian more constant, earnest and devout in attendance on every ordinance of the Church, not only on the Sabbath morning services, but on every service, every prayer meeting, every bible class, every appointment for the spiritual benefit of the Church. From none of them did he ever excuse himself. He did not feel as many Church members seem to do that he had any right to absent himself from any of the spiritual services of the Church, or from any of the appointments of his pastor; he felt, as every member of the Church ought to feel, that by his solemn vows binding him as a member of the Church by the oath of God, he was under the most imperative obligations to attend on every service appointed, and that to absent himself, merely from love of ease, or for the sake of his business, as some of you do, from the prayer meeting, would be a manifest inconsistency and a breach of sacred obligation and solemn vows. Not only so, he felt as every one of you ought to feel that he could not afford to lose any opportunity offered to him in the Church to which he belonged, of spiritual benefits; that he needed every help he could get, and that a wilful absence from a single prayer meeting might deprive his soul of lasting good; that the very service he would lose might be of all others the very one especially suited to his case. And he felt right, and what he feared, some of you ignorantly suffer; and your feebleness of Christian character, and want of positive holy influence is in great degree attributable to your neglect of the means of God's appointment for securing His grace. No man ever knew or heard of a truly devoted and useful Christian, who neglected the weekly appointments of his own Church; and no man ever heard of one who did so, no matter how kind or generous or honorable, whom both the Church and the world did not regard as inconsistent, and over whom the

Pastor and the faithful members did not sincerely mourn. Oh how different was the example of our brother in this respect! And yet it was not a whit more obligatory on him than on every one of you, as you will assuredly find when you stand before the judgment seat, and are called to account for your neglected Church privileges.

Again, where in all the Sabbath Schools of ~~you~~ ^{our} land was there a more constant, earnest and devout *Sabbath School teacher*, and one who sought more earnestly to lead the members of his class to Christ and to save their soul? This was no mere perfunctory work with him, no mere hearing of a Bible lesson, or explaining of Bible difficulties; but a precious and valued opportunity of urging Christ and Salvation upon the dear youth that attended his class. In his class direct address to them in regard to their souls was never neglected, either in the way of inquiry, instruction, invitation or warning. Indeed his pupils have, some of them, told me that this seemed to be his main object; not so much to expound the passage fully, as to apply to them some truth or suggestion derived from it earnestly. And this is really the only kind of Sabbath School teaching worthy of the name. The Sabbath School teacher who meets his or her class Sabbath after Sabbath, without direct efforts to lead them to Christ, and earnest and prayerful words of warning and entreaty, desecrates both his office and the day, and it is to be feared does more injury than good. His proper work in this narrow but important sphere is just the same as that of the Minister in the pulpit, it is to preach Christ to the dear children and lambs of the flock, and if he neglects it he insensibly but indelibly perverts all their conceptions of religion and the Sabbath. This is a development of Christian labour in which diligence is very important, and is always richly rewarded. The Sabbath School teacher who is often absent, and leaves his class

unprovided for, and pays no regard to them during the week, is no more fit for his position than the Minister who would with like irregularity attend upon his duties. Who ever heard, I ask again, of Capt. McCORKLE ever being absent except by an unavoidable necessity?—and of *irregularity, never*. The same obligation rests on others as on him; and what he did others can do.

Again, where, in all our Churches, have you ever known an *elder or officer* who in all the acknowledged and generally understood duties of his position was more exemplary, or acted with a more single eye to the glory of God and the spiritual interests of the Church? You well know how faithful, how prompt and how sympathizing were his attentions upon every sick and afflicted member; and his concern for any one of the flock whom he saw swerving from the path of duty, was deep and earnest. Humble, unpretending, shrinking from every thing that would savour of forwardness, and conscious of his deficiencies to a painful degree, often when others could see nothing but excellencies, still when truth, or the purity of the Church, or its interests in any way were involved, he was decided, firm and fearless, and always most judicious and prudent. Who among us is ready to take his place as an officer of this Church? Some of you have enjoyed far greater advantages of education than he; and all your other advantages have been at least equal; who, where is the man who, at the call of his Church, is ready to take the vacated place in our eldership? Several of you ought to be; several of you might have been far more than you are, had you not been slothful in the use of privileges and the performance of duties devolving on you as Church members.

Nearly the whole of Capt. McCORKLE's great usefulness as an elder of the Church, and much of it, indeed,

as a member, would have never been attained, and his Church would never have been blessed with his effective official care and example, and its very existence at one time would have been more than doubtful, if he had shrunk from one single duty, as many of you do; and that is praying in public. You all know how edifying and how richly "gifted" he was in prayer. But these gifts were attained only through many and very great difficulties and severe struggles. There are, none of you, I do most confidently believe, who are members of this Church, who are more unqualified for this by nature or constitution, than he was, and few of you who would find any thing like the same degree of difficulty that he did, if you were just as determined as he was to do all your whole duty, and willing, as Paul says, even to be accounted a fool for Christ's sake. But the spirit that shrinks from this difficulty, is one that, brethren beloved, is sorely retarding your spiritual progress, marring your Christian character, and lessening your usefulness and influence to a degree you little imagine. *How much* it is doing this the case of Capt. McCORKLE may help you see, and may God give you a willing heart to see and profit by it to your soul's peace and joy.

It is not unimportant to add here the remark, that his diligence in attending to the interests of his own soul and of the Church, as you well know, did not at all interfere with his diligence and success as a man of business. On the other hand it so chastened, guided, controled and elevated, while it really stimulated it by a new and powerful motive, that it really, to a great extent, spiritualized his worldly business, and increased his success. Let no man say, so long as the memory of our brother and of hundreds of others too, like him in this respect, lives in the world, that the earnest and successful pursuit of business leaves no time for constant and regular attendance

upon the week-day services of the Church, or for labours for its prosperity. Every such plea is proved to be false by thousands of examples, and by few more striking than that of our brother. All that men lose by serving God will in the end prove gain; all they gain by neglect will prove a curse that will eat as doth a canker.

Oh! brethren, "be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." As your pastor set over you in the Lord to watch for your souls as one who must give account, I charge you, over the grave of our departed brother and ruler in Christ, and amidst the tears of a bereaved Church, I charge you, I pray and beseech you, be not slothful; shrink from no duty, from no sacrifice, from no self-denial, by which you may increase your power to be useful, and mark your total separation from the world. See that you are following in the footsteps of the flock, for unless you are, you may rest assured that you are not following the Great Shepherd but wandering from the fold and in danger.

You have the same means of grace they had, the same precious Bible, the same holy Sabbaths, the same Church privileges, and still more you have the same Almighty Saviour, the same Holy Ghost, the same precious promises; nothing in the universe but your own unbelief and slothfulness prevents you from attaining all they did and much more. Grace can do for you as much as for them, it is just as free to you as to them. By far the greatest differences between professing christians in the degree of their usefulness and the extent of their influence arise not from natural or external causes, but from the different degrees in which they lay hold on covenant *grace*, a grace that is equally free to all, and that all are commanded and exhorted to receive. "Be ye *filled* with the spirit." "Your heavenly Father is *more willing*," &c.

“Wherefore receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, *let us have grace*, whereby we may serve God acceptably.”

The vacant place in your eldership caused by his death is a loud and affecting call upon all of you, and especially upon the male members of the Church to the cultivation of greater personal holiness, and devotion to and sacrifices for its spiritual welfare, that the void may be filled, if not by one, at least by the united efforts of many. Especially is it a call upon us to seek with united and earnest cries and efforts for a permanent and pervading revival of religion, for such an effusion of the Spirit as shall pervade our Church, infuse new life and zeal into every member and elder and deacon, and unite us into a more compact body by filling us all with the spirit of Christ, and as shall give to the ministrations of the pulpit new spiritual power. All spiritual gifts, all those graces that truly fit men to be either ministers, elders or deacons, or useful members of the Church, are the work of the Spirit. From Him they must be sought. By Him alone can the void now so sensibly felt among us be filled. Quickly can He raise up and qualify from among the very feeblest of the flock, other faithful labourers, men of wisdom and discernment, prudence and energy, faith and patience, to go in and out before the flock, to rule with diligence, and to administer its affairs with a single eye to the will and the glory of God. *All our help must come from Him.* Let us then in deep prostration bow before Him as He lays His rod upon us; let us with united cry beseech Him to visit this vine of His right hand's planting, this vine so long favoured by Him with the care and nurture of His servant, and upon which His smile has in days past rested, and from which His face is even now we trust not averted, to visit it in such spiritual power as shall make it a monument to the praise and glory of His grace, far more than it ever has been, 'till every soul

among us shall say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad," and even an unbelieving world be forced to confess, "The Lord hath done great things for them."

And let our prayers be mingled with thanksgiving that He gave to us such a precious gift, whose praise is in all the Churches, and by whose faith, patience, and diligence and abundant gifts, this Church was carried through its long period of feebleness to comparative independence and ability, and that he was not taken away until this his work was done and others raised up among whom the burdens he bore could be divided.

Let the history of the past encourage us. Let there be no faint-hearted or fearful one among us. Let every man, woman and child come up to the work of the Lord. Let there be not a slothful one in all our borders. Let no family altars lie in ruins or be thrown down. Let no closets be neglected. Let no Achan be found among us, who robs God by his covetousness and brings shame upon the whole. Let there be no vacant places at our weekly meetings.

And see to it brethren, that by no words or actions, by no indiscreet zeal, or uncharitableness, or impatience, or giving undue importance to minor matters, the bonds of brotherly love be broken or even chafed. Guard sedulously against the first appearance of anything that would tend to division. Many a prosperous church has been rent to pieces by a mere trifle. Let no root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled. Let nothing be so dear to you as the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of love.

Then shall your own souls be filled with the foretastes of heaven; then shall your families be crowned with proofs of His covenant faithfulness; then shall your chil-

dren be early brought to seal their love to Jesus at his table; and then shall others around be attracted to Christ; and then shall you too, after a little while, when your work of faith and labour of love is finished, inherit the promises, with the saints whose holy examples have cheered your path. "Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

